

# Delaware Quitline Offers Free Smoking Cessation Supplies to Celebrate Its 15th Anniversary

**DOVER** – The Division of Public Health (DPH) is helping the Delaware Quitline celebrate a major milestone this month. The Quitline has now been helping Delaware smokers break their addiction for the past 15 years.

The Delaware Quitline is a toll-free tobacco cessation hotline (1-866-409-1858) that provides tobacco users (including e-cigarette users) the option of receiving counseling by phone or in person. Health care professionals trained in cessation counseling are available statewide for in-person counseling. All Quitline services are free to Delaware residents 18 years of age and older.

For eligible smokers, the Quitline also provides Food and Drug Administration-approved prescription cessation aids and non-prescription nicotine-replacement therapy such as patches, gum, and lozenges. To celebrate the 15-year anniversary, while supplies last, cessation aids will be available, free, to all participants who enroll in one of the Quitline counseling programs.

“This is a significant event in our tobacco prevention efforts and we are so pleased to be able to offer additional assistance to those who want to engage in healthier lifestyles and stop smoking,” said Dr. Karyl Rattay, DPH Director. “Quitting smoking is one of the most important things a person can do to reduce their cancer risk. Additionally, we must continue to work with Delawareans on making overall healthier lifestyle choices, such as getting regular physical activity,

and eating healthy diets, especially those high in fruits, vegetables and whole grains and low in added sugars like sugar sweetened beverages.”

Since it began in February 2001, the Delaware Quitline has served more than 49,000 Delaware adults. Of those, more than 36,000 received telephone counseling, and almost 13,000 received face-to-face counseling. Additionally, 25 percent of those who responded to the follow-up survey, conducted seven months after services are provided, reported that they had not smoked in the past month.

During the past decade, Delaware has implemented the comprehensive Tobacco Prevention and Control Program statewide, and youth smoking rates have declined. High school students reporting “current cigarette smoking” is at an all-time low of 9.9 percent according to the 2015 Delaware Youth Risk Behavior Survey. This is a 69.3 percent decrease since 1999. However, the percentage of Delaware adults who reported that they currently smoke was 19.9 percent, according to the 2014 Behavioral Risk Factor Survey. This percentage has remained statistically unchanged for the past four years.

Lisa Moore, the Division’s Tobacco Prevention and Control Program manager, said, “While the high school data is still promising, we must be diligent in addressing tobacco use at all ages – and we must do everything possible to help smokers who want to quit. Tobacco use is still the leading cause of preventable death in Delaware and the United States,” Moore said. “Prevention is key, however, the Delaware Quitline is a useful resource for those who already smoke and need help quitting.”

The Quitline also has special programs for pregnant smokers and smokeless tobacco users and has counselors who speak Spanish. The Delaware Quitline is a Division of Public Health program managed through a contract with Alere Wellbeing. It is funded in part by grants from the U.S. Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Delaware Health Fund. For more information about the Delaware Quitline, visit: <http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/quitline.html>.

*A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind or speech-disabled can call the DPH phone number above by using TTY services. Dial 7-1-1 or 800-232-5460 to type your conversation to a relay operator, who reads your conversation to a hearing person at DPH. The relay operator types the hearing person's spoken words back to the TTY user. To learn more about TTY availability in Delaware, visit <http://delawarerelay.com>. Delaware Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, and drink almost no sugary beverages.*